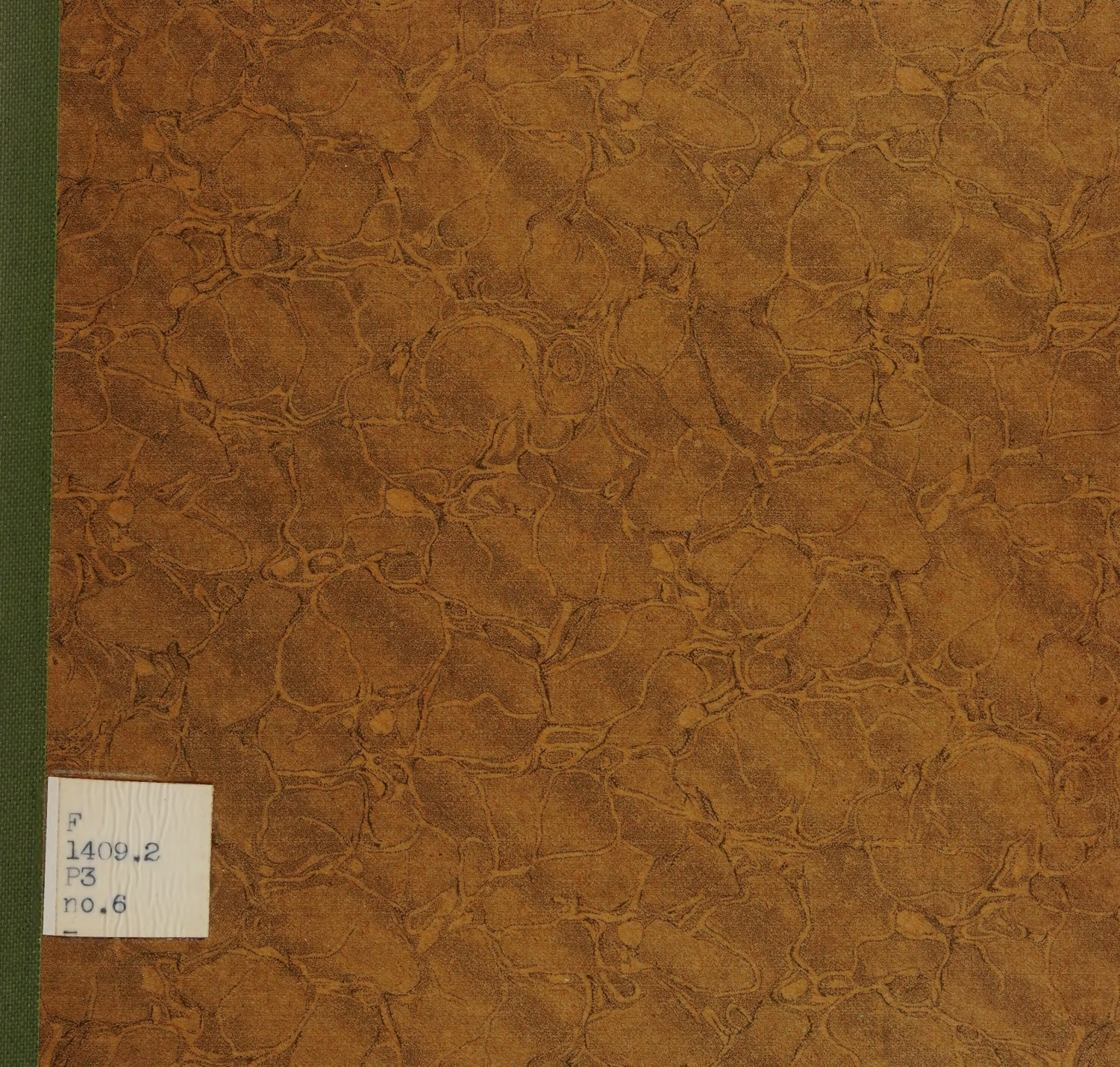




The image shows the front cover of a book. The cover is decorated with a brown marbled paper pattern, featuring irregular, vein-like shapes in shades of tan and brown. A vertical strip of dark green material, likely cloth or leather, forms the spine on the left side. A small, white, rectangular label is affixed to the lower-left corner of the cover, containing the following text:

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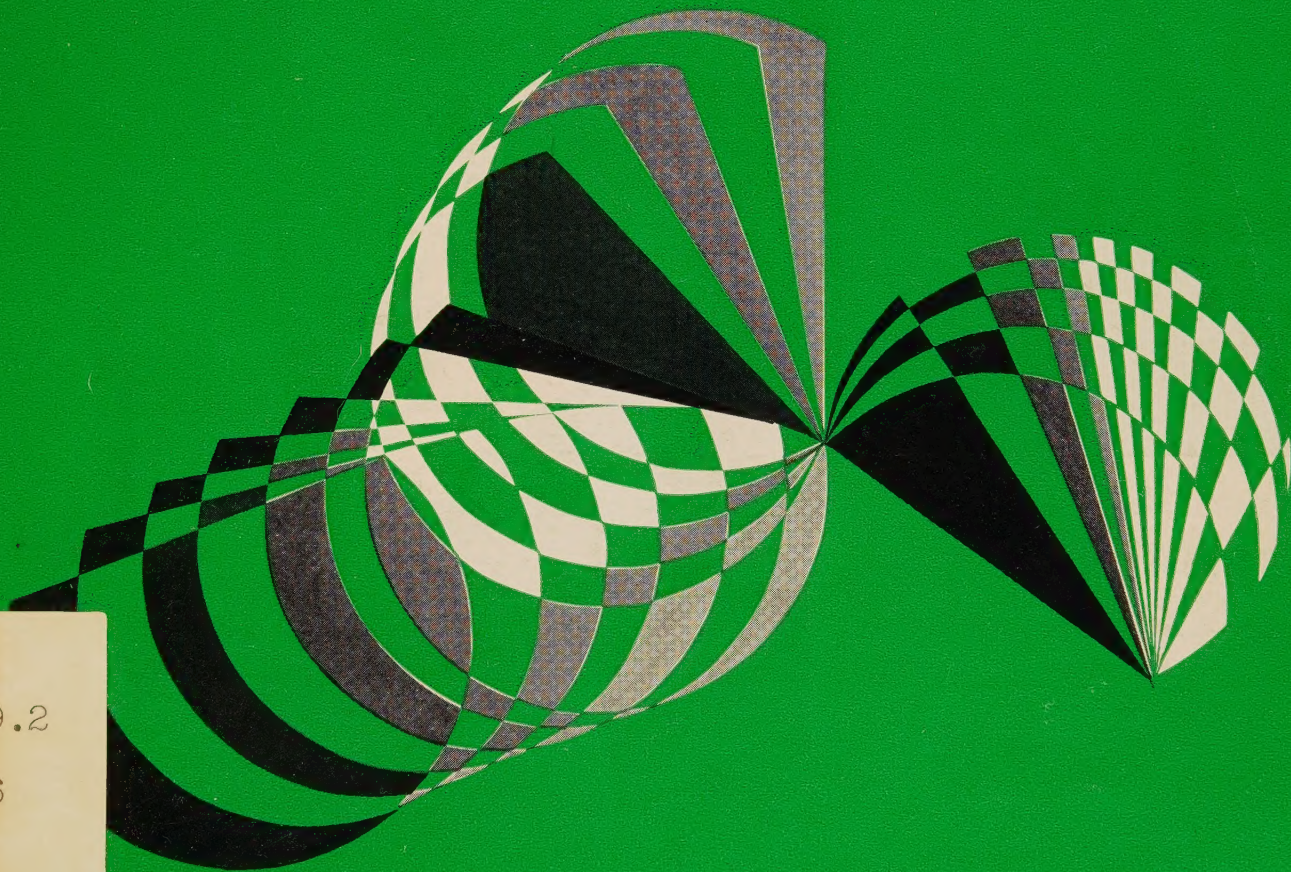
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COSTA RICA

A M E R I C A N R E P U B L I C S S E R I E S

No. 6

1960

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ORGANIZATION OF AMERICAN STATES
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THE AMERICAN REPUBLICS SERIES incorporates the basic information on each of the 21 member states of the Organization of American States formerly presented in two separate series: the American Nations and Travel in the Americas Series, both of which will be superseded by the new series upon its completion.

This series is prepared under the direction of Lyn S. Manduley, Chief Publications Editor, Editorial Division, Department of Public Information, Pan American Union, Washington, D.C.; this number, by Regis Dunnigan.

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The Atlantic Ocean breaks against Costa Rica's rocky coast

When the Spaniards arrived in the land that is now Costa Rica, they anticipated finding gold in great quantities because the Indians they saw were adorned with beautifully fashioned golden ornaments. Thus they named the land "Costa Rica," meaning "rich coast." Though they were doomed to disappointment in their search for gold, time has proved that this progressive Central American republic is rich in more important ways. The land itself is unusually fertile as well as scenically beautiful, and the Costa Ricans are a freedom-loving, peaceful, and democratic people.

With an area of 19,575 square miles—about the size of West Virginia—Costa Rica is the second smallest republic in Central America. It is bounded on the north by Nicaragua, on the east by the Caribbean Sea, on the south by Panama, and on the west by the Pacific Ocean. The country is divided into three distinct regions: the grassy and forested coastal plains in the tropical zone below 3,200 feet; the rich and fertile Central Plateau in the temperate zone at 3,200 to 6,500 feet; and the cool highlands at altitudes above 6,500 feet. The cool mountainous region is too difficult to cultivate and consists chiefly of pastureland.

The mountains which cross Costa Rica from northwest to southeast have three main ranges rising to altitudes of more than 12,500 feet; these are the Guanacaste, Central, and Talamanca ranges. The comparatively regular Caribbean coastline measures 133 miles, while the Pacific coast with its many indentations, is almost five times as long. There are two peninsulas on the Pacific, Guanacaste (or Nicoya) to the north and Osa to the south, each embracing a gulf of considerable size. Within these gulfs there are numerous small islands which belong to Costa Rica; Cocos Island in the Pacific is also a possession. Costa Rica has a network of 18 rivers which rise in the mountains and provide abundant water power. The southern branch of the San Juan is the most important and forms part of Costa Rica's boundary with Nicaragua.

The soil of the valleys is unusually fertile, due to the volcanic ash deposited during many centuries. This rich, porous soil is ideal for producing high grade coffee and Costa Rican coffee is known throughout the world for its

quality. Although most of the country's volcanoes are practically extinct now, some are still mildly active. The principal mountain peaks are Chirripó Grande (12,532 feet), Terbi (12,512 feet), and Kámuk (11,688 feet). The volcano Póas (8,900 feet), located near the city of Alajuela, is said to have the world's largest crater, measuring more than a mile in diameter; and Irazú (11,322 feet), near the city of Cartago, is an active volcano that can be viewed at close range.

Spanish is the language of the Costa Ricans, who number around 1,500,000; many people also speak English, particularly in the urban areas of the Central Plateau and the coastal cities.

The Central Plateau

Three fourths of the country's population dwell in the *Meseta Central*, or Central Plateau where the temperature averages 75° F. with little variation, even in the summer. Rippling streams, rocky gorges, waterfalls, pine groves, and rolling hills covered with the luxuriant waxyleafed coffee trees are found in the broken terrain of this plateau. In some sections a chain of volcanic peaks rings the landscape like a vast theatrical backdrop.

San José

San José has an ideal location at 3,870 feet above sea level, in the broad fertile valley of the Central Plateau. The nearby countryside includes everything from vast expanses of coffee trees to grassy pasturelands, from picturesque villages to trails through age-old forests.

Political, economic, and cultural heart of the republic, San José was founded in 1737 but did not become the capital until 1823, succeeding Cartago, the first capital. The clean wide streets are flanked by spacious parks filled with lovely flowers and by many modern buildings as well as those of colonial times. This city is the least Spanish in architecture of any of the Central American capitals; many of the houses follow American or European styles, having sloping lawns on wide, tree-shaded streets in contrast with Spanish colonial houses facing narrow streets in older sections of the city. San José is laid out in straight avenues cut at right angles by cross streets;

San José

it has numerous plazas. Most of the places of interest are within easy walking distance from the center of town.

The principal thoroughfare is Avenida Central, which becomes the Paseo Colón, so-called in honor of Christopher Columbus, after it leaves the commercial section of the city. Along the twin-paved avenues of the Paseo, lined with beautiful trees, you will see the colorful chalets of one of the finest residential sections of the city. Paseo Colón connects the city with La Sabana, formerly the site of the national airport but used now for sports events in connection with the adjacent National Stadium. The Costa Rican Tourist Institute is housed in the former airport administration building, which contains hand-carved mahogany doors and ceiling beams and wrought iron grilles and railings; it is said to be among the finest interpretations of Spanish-Moorish design in Central America.

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Increased air traffic made it necessary to build a larger airport about 12 miles from San José, near the city of Alajuela. The new terminal El Coco is the largest, the most convenient, and the most modern in Central America.

The parks of San José are interesting and indicative of the way of life of the *Josefinos*, who are a gregarious people with a love of beauty. Bolívar Park, on the outskirts of the city, is dedicated to Simón Bolívar, the "George Washington of South America," and is a miniature forest and zoological garden. It includes an interesting collection of fauna—pumas, monkeys, snakes, and birds—native to the Costa Rican jungle.

Central Park, with its mosaic pavements and cement benches, where everyone sits and watches the rest of the world go by, is the scene of the *retreta*, the tri-weekly promenade of girls walking arm-in-arm in one direction around the plaza while the young men walk in the opposite direction. This old Spanish custom is disappearing in many urban centers of Latin America, but it still prevails in Costa Rica. The Military Band gives concerts every Wednesday and Sunday in the park's attractive central pavilion. The National Lottery, for the benefit of the hospitals of the country, is held in the park every other Sunday.



The Metropolitan Cathedral in San José

Morazán Park is composed of four large gardens which meet at the Temple of Music—a circular bandstand, which is an exact replica of the Petit Trianon in France—where the band performs every Monday and Friday. This park is marked by an imposing statue of Simón Bolívar. National Park, in the eastern section of the city, contains a superb bronze monument dedicated to the five sister republics of Central America, commemorating their victory over William Walker, the freebooter from Tennessee who was defeated when he attempted to make himself dictator of Central America. A number of important public buildings are located on several attractive parks in the eastern section of the city. On España Park you will find the Casa Amarilla (Yellow House), where the Ministry of Foreign Relations has its offices, and the Edificio Metálico (Metal Building), where several of the principal schools of the capital are housed; and the National Liquor Factory. The tree of Central American brotherhood is in this park. La Merced Church and the Municipal

**The General Post Office,
San José**



Palace, an ultra modern building housing the local government offices, face on Merced Park. In this park you will see an enormous spherical stone, one of several mementos of a forgotten race. This monolith is an archaeological enigma, recently brought from one of the regions where an aboriginal civilization flourished once.

Attired in full-dress uniform the members of the Military Band of Costa Rica attend 8 o'clock Mass every Sunday at the Metropolitan Cathedral, famous for its choir and music. Other interesting churches are El Carmen, La Soledad, and Los Dolores, all in the downtown section of the city; there also are the Anglican Church founded in 1864, the first of its kind in Central America, and the Templo Bíblico, a non-denominational organization with a large congregation. Most of the Protestant churches are represented in Costa Rica, for while the country is predominantly Roman Catholic, religious liberty prevails.

The National Theater, or "Million Dollar Theater" as it is proudly called by the Costa Ricans, is an artistic jewel with carrara marble stairways and balconies, superb sculpture, marvelous ceiling and wall paintings executed by European artists, and a regal mirrored salon. Here the ministers of foreign affairs of the American republics met in 1960 in two Meetings of Consultation convoked by the Organization of American States (OAS).

The Legislative Assembly building is located on Avenida Central. This building is noted for its excellent collection of portraits of Costa Rica's presidents and other statesmen. Visitors will find many interesting exhibits at the National Museum, noted for its collection of pre-Columbian antiquities; there is also an extensive collection of well preserved flora and fauna. Located in the former Buena Vista Barracks, at one time the principal fortress of the country, the museum contains many relics of Costa Rica's early history.

Philatelists familiar with Costa Rican stamps will recognize the General Post Office. This imposing edifice, built in 1916, contains the telegraph and radio offices as well as the philatelic office. The National Library of Costa Rica is located in the downtown section of the city and has over 100,000 volumes on its shelves.

The liquors produced at the National Liquor Factory are well-known for their excellence. Visitors are welcome in this government-owned enterprise, which produces such popular liquors as the unique Crema de Nance and the famous Cocorí rum. The Public Market on Avenida Central is colorful and interesting to visit. Here one finds almost every fruit and vegetable known to the torrid and temperate zones and many native handicrafts. Sidewalk



San José's famous National Theater

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stands display countless small but necessary wares often found in five-and-ten-cent stores.

Among other places which may interest visitors are the San Juan de Dios Hospital, with its modern clinic; the snake farm, where the anti-snake bite serums are prepared; and the Chapui Asylum, a famous retreat for the insane, all located along the Paseo Colón in a single compound which is generally known by the name of the hospital. The University of Costa Rica, formerly located in the heart of San José, moved in 1957 into the new University City in the suburb of San Pedro de Montes de Oca. The Law School remains on the old campus within San José proper, where the National Conservatory of Music and the National Academy of Graphic Arts are also located.

There are many interesting trips which can be made into the surrounding countryside from San José. On the outskirts of the city are mountain ranches affording horseback riding, fishing, tennis, hunting and swimming.

Cities of the Central Plateau

Most of the cities of the Central Plateau are not far from the capital, so the traveler with a few days of leisure may visit several interesting cities if he so desires. Heredia, in the center of the coffee district, is six miles from the capital. Called the "City of Flowers," Heredia is a typical Spanish colonial town settled by Andalusians. Many of the white houses with red tiled roofs, the lovely patios, and ancient church towers date from colonial times. The Costa Rican Normal School, one of the best in Central America, is located here. Poás Volcano, towering above the other mountain peaks, is reached by a paved road which runs northward from Heredia through Barba, a typical village noted as the birthplace of Cleto González Víquez, twice President of Costa Rica. It is possible to reach Poás by four-wheel-drive vehicles or saddle horses, which can be hired at one of the nearby ranches. The trip by horseback takes about one and a half hours.

The volcano rises to almost 9,000 feet and the view of the vast crater, over a mile in diameter, is breath-taking. The crater is several hundred feet deep, devoid of vegetation and lined with cold grey rocks and massive boulders. Once Poás had one of the largest geysers in the world, sending up a column of boiling, sulphurous water from the center of the lagoon some 2,000 to 3,000 feet into the air about every ten minutes. However, several years ago Poás swallowed all of the water in its huge crater and turned into an ordinary smoking volcano, after ejecting quantities of ashes as high as 23,000 feet into the air which damaged crops in the region. The surrounding valley is really the bed of an old crater, filled with fantastic black shapes, the remains of a forest. A mile or so away is a twin crater, also an extinct volcano and now a natural lake, filled with crystal-clear, sparkling water. The walls of the crater are covered by dense green vegetation.

Eight miles from Heredia on the Pan American Highway, is Alajuela, capital of Alajuela Province and one of the nation's important cities. Renowned for its beautiful flowers and invigorating climate, this city is a popular vacation spot for the Josefinos as well as the center of

The market place in Heredia



an important sugar-growing and cattle-raising district. The principal granary of Costa Rica is located in Alajuela, also an important center for lumber, coffee, and livestock. It is here that you see the impressive statue of Juan Santamaría, called *Erizo* (Hedgehog), the drummer boy who routed William Walker. This native son distinguished himself by forcing Walker and his followers to surrender when he threw lighted faggots into the armory where they were entrenched. Alajuela is the scene of the colorful weekly cattle fair and the home of the *Escuela de Tejidos* (Weaving School).

Only a few minutes by car from Alajuela is an excellent bathing resort, *Ojo de Agua*, where the waters of a lavish mountain spring flow at the rate of 6,000 gallons a minute. This is the source of the water supply for the port of Puntarenas. A marvelous swimming pool, good restaurant, and dance floor make this one of the most popular attractions on the Central Plateau. Also close by is *El Brasil*, one of the country's largest coffee processing establishments.

The ancient city of Cartago, once the capital of Costa Rica, was founded in 1564 by Juan Vázquez de Coronado, the Spanish governor who advanced the conquest of Costa Rica by peaceful means. The city still adheres to many old Spanish customs and traditions. Only 14 miles from San José by the Northern Railway to Puerto Limón or by motor road, Cartago is attractive to tourists. Its altitude of 4,760 feet accounts for its stimulating and spring-like climate. Situated at the base of Irazú volcano, the city was destroyed by earthquake in 1823 and 1910, but it survived these disasters successfully.

One of the chief points of interest are the ruins of an old church destroyed in 1910 by the earthquake. Among interesting places to visit are the college of San Luis Gonzaga, a trade school conducted by the Salesians, the oldest institution of its kind in Costa Rica; the Hospital Maximiliano Peralta, named for one of Costa Rica's great doctors; and the market, near the railroad station. The Sunday market is very colorful, for here one sees the country people dressed in their best attire, driving their



Costa Rica's patron saint, La Negrita, is enshrined in this altar

beautifully decorated oxcarts filled with various wares. All sorts of delicious fruits, exotic flowers, vegetables, sacks of green coffee, leather goods, and other articles are displayed and sold at this weekly fair.

It is in Cartago that the patron saint of the country, *La Negrita*, a famous sculpture of the Virgin in black stone, is enshrined. A beautiful church, the Shrine of Our Lady of the Angels, has been erected by means of public contributions at the place where, according to legend, over 300 years ago a peasant girl gathering firewood first saw the image of the Virgin. The Virgin is supposed to have revealed herself not once, but several times, at a spot where a spring bubbled through a circular stone; and it is here that the church was built. The waters are said to have miraculous healing powers and many gold and silver objects have been left by the faithful in gratitude for their cures.

The feast day of the saint is a national holiday, celebrated on August 2, the day the Virgin first appeared. At that time the tiny sacred stone image is carried to another church in Cartago and after a solemn procession through the city, is returned to the shrine for another year. Pilgrims from all over Central America and Mexico travel to Costa Rica for this occasion.

Only a two-and-a-half mile drive to the east of Cartago, but at an altitude of 300 feet lower, are the famous hot springs of Agua Caliente. In this region are the small villages of Coris and Navarro, where horses of Arabian stock are bred. The road to nearby Paraíso passes through sisal plantations and en route one sees two curious contrasts—the ruins of a Spanish colonial village and a modern radio station. A dirt road leads from Paraíso to Lankaster's Farm, Las Cóncavas, one of the famous orchid farms of Costa Rica.

The Orosi Valley is known as the "vale of enchantment," for here nature has been most lavish with her scenic gifts. The Reventazón River follows a turbulent course through the length of the valley, green and lush with groves of oranges and other citrus trees, and with coffee and banana plantations.

A trip on horseback can be made into the virgin jungle at the far end of the valley where the cataract of Orosi,



Shrine of Our Lady of the Angels in Cartago

a 300-foot waterfall cascades into the midst of the forest. There are several hot sulphur springs of volcanic origin. Of historical interest in the peaceful village of Orosi is the 300-year-old Orosi Mission, the first Spanish mission in Costa Rica. The church is little changed since it was built by monks of the Franciscan Order. Viewing its exquisitely carved altars and pillars, its fine old paintings, religious articles handwrought of gold and silver, and beautiful religious vestments—all in a marvelous state of preservation—one finds it difficult to believe that this holy place is so ancient.

The ruins of Ujarrás, a Spanish mission dating back to 1561, lie in another valley in this same region. Here some Franciscan monks under the patronage of Lorenzo de Bienvenida founded the first parish among the Huetar Indians. In 1565 King Phillip II of Spain presented Bienvenida with an image of the Virgin, which was installed in the mission. In 1566 the British pirates Mansfield and Morgan landed at Portete on the Caribbean with the idea of sacking the country. The Spanish governor Juan López de la Flor assembled all the fighting men and sent the others to the mission to pray. The pirates, 700 strong, were beaten off by weaker defenders, whose victory was attributed to the prayers of those gathered in the church,



Swimming pools at Ojo de Agua

Irazú, one of the few
volcanoes that can be
viewed at close range

Among other interesting places to visit around Cartago are the little village of San Rafael de Oreamuno, with its fields of barley and its malting plant, and Durán, where the famous sanitorium for pulmonary diseases is located. As the highway winds steeply upward toward Irazú Volcano, beautiful panoramic views are disclosed. Early morning is the best time to visit Irazú, for the air is clear and the view is usually splendid. Here one sees both the Atlantic and Pacific—two oceans at one time—a sight that even Balboa never saw. At a height of 11,322 feet, amid clouds of vapor and smoke, you reach the summit, and after climbing over rocks through a wind-swept, barren area you can gaze down into the vast, bottomless chasm filled with molten lava and boiling sulphur. This is one of the few active volcanoes that can be viewed at such close range and it is an exciting experience to see the steady flow of steam and ashes being ejected several hundred feet into the air.

Another volcano which interests many visitors is Turrialba, named for her snowy white crown, 11,220 feet high.

While this semi-active volcano is less accessible than Poás or Irazú, its deep rumblings are awe-inspiring, and for one who likes adventure and outdoor life, the trip to the summit is challenging. The journey is made on horseback from the village of Pacayas. At the summit of Turrialba you have a magnificent view of the surrounding country and the city of Turrialba, which lies on another road. The Inter-American Institute of Agricultural Sciences is located in Turrialba, 40 miles from San José, and is connected with the capital by road and railway; it is an interesting place to visit, especially for agriculturists and cattle breeders. The Institute is one of the Specialized Organizations of the OAS.

South of Cartago the Pan American Highway crosses the Talamanca Range to San Isidro del General, 71 miles away. This sector has the highest elevation on the route of the Pan American Highway between Texas and Panama, reaching 10,931 feet. From San Isidro to Panama the road is impassable. This city is a thriving agricultural center served by bus and LACSA, the domestic airline.





One of Costa Rica's
many coffee fincas



The Inter-American Institute of
Agricultural Sciences

The Atlantic Coast

Puerto Limón is a
busy port



The Atlantic Coast

Puerto Limón is the only sizable port on the Caribbean and is the largest city in the Province of Limón. One of the two main gateways into Costa Rica by sea, Puerto Limón is the country's second city in size. The city is built on the site of the ancient Indian village of Cariari, which Columbus saw when he anchored here in 1502. Today Puerto Limón has well-paved streets, electricity, and good sanitation. Among interesting places to visit are the Cathedral facing Parque Vargas, a miniature botanical garden with tropical fruit trees and palm-lined promenades; the Club Miramar, with an open-air salt water pool; and the United Fruit Company Zone, with its brightly painted houses, hospital, community house, and well-kept gardens.

There is no road connecting Puerto Limón with the Central Plateau and the capital, but several airlines and the Northern Railway serve this port city. The trip by rail to San José gives passengers a wonderful 10-mile view of the palm-fringed coral strand of beach washed by the breakers of the Caribbean, before the train enters the

banana country at Matina. The green of the lush banana plants is accented by magnificently colored parrots, long-billed toucans, and other colorful fauna. Along the route one also sees squat cacao trees with their green and brown pods hanging from limbs or drying in the sun on rocks beside the tracks. The first stop on the trip is at Siquirres, an important agricultural center, then the train traverses a narrow ledge between the mountains and the Reventazón River.

The train climbs 2,000 feet in the 62 miles between Puerto Limón and Turrialba, which is the beginning of the coffee region and the highlands. From here the railway ascends another 3,000 feet at the rate of 100 feet a mile for the next 30 miles, twisting and turning as each mile passes. The weather becomes delightfully cool and invigorating as the tropics are left behind. The whole Reventazón Valley presents a breathtaking spectacle, with the river itself appearing as a narrow white ribbon in the distance. After crossing the Continental Divide beyond Cartago the train descends gradually until it reaches San José.



A Costa Rican asado,
or barbecue

Guanacaste Province

The province of Guanacaste occupies the western peninsula of Nicoya, a region of great cattle ranges. Here, in the "wild west" of Costa Rica, one sees cowboys driving large herds of cattle across the savannas. Their horses are outfitted with the finest saddles over skirts of black fleece, cruppers decorated with horsehair rosettes and tassels, and gay adornments on their heads. Here you will find the rivers teeming with fish and a variety of game in the highlands and lowlands. The flora of the province, typical of three climatic zones, attracts naturalists from all parts of the hemisphere. The archaeological ruins left by the Chorotega Indians are said to be linked with the Aztec culture. The *guayacán* or *lignum-vitae* tree is native to this part of the country. This hardwood tree is so huge that its enormous branches can shelter an entire herd of cattle.

Guanacaste is an agricultural region, producing fruits, corn, beans, and other crops as well as cattle and hides. Minerals found in this area include gold, manganese, and lime deposits. The dry season is the best time of the

year to visit this province. There are few hotels but the people are very hospitable and accommodations are available in private homes. This region is a wonderful place for those who enjoy outdoor life.

Nicoya is the largest city in the province, though it is rather inaccessible. It is connected by air with San José and by an all-weather road with Puerto Jesús on the Gulf of Nicoya. This city is the cattle center for the entire peninsula. Liberia, the capital of the province, is on the Pan American Highway and visitors can be accommodated in hotels and *pensiones*. Cities in the province which are of interest are La Cruz, near the Nicaraguan border; Bagaces, south of Liberia; and Las Cañas, the cattle center for the Tilarán district.

Taboga, in the heart of the province, gives the visitor a true picture of country life. This beautiful town, lying in a fertile plain fringed by high mountains has not been discovered by many travelers. It is rather difficult to reach by land but easily accessible by plane and well worth the effort because of the scenery, the plentiful game and fish, and the excellent accommodations at the mountain ranches.

The people of this province are hospitable, high-spirited, and pleasure-loving; they have many regional songs and dances. You will enjoy watching the Punto Guanacasteco, a lively dance in which numerous couples stamp and whirl simultaneously, occasionally interrupting the marimba and guitar with shouts of "bomba."

The Pacific Coast

Puntarenas Province is long and narrow, stretching 635 miles along the Pacific Ocean. This is one of the most beautiful regions of Costa Rica as well as one of the most important to the economy of the country. Three of the nation's four principal ports are located on the Pacific. As there are few roads in this area, a considerable amount of coastwise shipping is carried on among the Pacific ports.

The port of Puntarenas is the third largest city in the nation, capital of the province, and the most important one in the western section of the country. Despite the heat, it is a favorite summer resort of the people from the Central Plateau and is very gay with holiday crowds from January to March. This Pacific port is located on a narrow strip of land, five blocks wide and three miles long, jutting out into the Gulf of Nicoya. Connected with the capital by the modern Pacific Electric Railway, a good paved road, and frequent air services, this tropical port has a brisk export-import trade. Among the exports are canned fish and shark products (skins, oils, etc.), sugar, coconuts, and cattle. The Pacific abounds in a variety of fish and off the coast the sharks and giant manatees (devilfish) test the skill of deep-sea fishermen.

Government and private launches maintain a coastal service with Salinas Bay, including Nicaragua and intermediate ports in Guanacaste Province, and the Pacific Steam Navigation Company ships from Panama and Central American ports make frequent calls here. One of the islands at the mouth of the harbor which is open to visitors is San Lucas, the nation's penal settlement, unique because of the few guards and lack of high fences. It is said that the sharks in the surrounding waters are the real guards. The local shops sell hand-carved combs, and brooches made from tortoise shell, the



Forging a wheel rim for a typical Costa Rican cart

handiwork of the prisoners. Other islands which may be visited are Chira, Cedro, and Los Negritos.

Cano Island, near the mouth of the Rio Grande de Terraba, is rich in asphalt which the Boruca Indians long ago used to calk their canoes. It is also rich in legend because it is said that Sir Francis Drake, the English pirate, buried vast treasures here. Fields of plantain originally planted by Peruvian Indians, who journeyed to the island to celebrate religious rites, are still growing. The settlements of pearl divers along the shores of the Gulf of Nicoya are also interesting places to visit. There is an abundance of mother-of-pearl all along the coast and the pre-Spanish Indians used it not only for ornaments but also for agricultural implements. Today it is still a source of income. Quepos, on the edge of Coronado Bay, was once an important banana port. While no longer important in international trade it is still a base for coastwise shipping along the Pacific.



Beautiful beaches stretch along the Pacific

The port of Golfito normally loads more metric tons of exports than any of the other Costa Rican ports, though it ranks third in imports. It is the principal banana port. The city is connected by air with San José and by the United Fruit Company Railway with another industrial carrier in Panama. Although this railway is used principally to carry the company's products, it also acts as a common carrier in this region which has a serious lack of roads. Golfito, like Puerto Limón, is a company town, with a community house where visitors may stay.

Like Stevenson's Treasure Island, Cocos Island is a thirty-square-mile bit of rocky, rugged terrain, completely uninhabited; its only traces of civilization are the remains of shacks erected by various expeditions which have

come from time to time to seek the pirate treasure supposedly buried here, and said by some to amount to one hundred million dollars. Cocos lies 186 miles from the Peninsula of Osa in the Pacific Ocean. There are many romantic tales woven around this tiny speck in the wide Pacific. One is the story of a life-size, pure gold statue of the Virgin which is said to have been buried here with statues of the saints at the time Peru revolted against Spain. Legend has it that the citizens of Callao, fleeing from Peru with the statues and other valuables, chartered a ship named the *Mary Dyer*; when chased by a man-of-war, the ship escaped to Cocos. Eleven boatloads of valuables, including the golden Virgin, had been taken ashore and buried before the pursuing ship caught up with the Peruvians and killed all but two by gunfire. Of these two, only one left charts or maps to his descendants.

Another story which gives credence to the tales of hidden treasure is the one about the pirate, William Dampier, who blockaded Panama in 1684 and captured many Spanish ships carrying treasures from Peru. Dampier is also supposed to have buried his plunder on this island. According to still another story, when the Central American Republics broke with Spain in 1821, the Spaniards of Costa Rica loaded schooners with gold, gems, and silver and buried this treasure on Cocos. It is said that only six men had charts showing the exact place where the treasure was buried but that all died before they could redeem it. Many expeditions, mostly British, and some well-financed, have tried fruitlessly to locate this almost legendary booty.

Permission to visit the island must be secured from the Government of Costa Rica and concessions to dig for treasure are granted on a 50-50 basis, with half of any of the spoils found going to the government. However, the island has more tangible assets in its magnificent scenery and the abundance of game fish. Former President Franklin D. Roosevelt visited the island several times on fishing trips. As there is no maritime service to Cocos, a boat must be chartered if you wish to visit the island; this can be arranged through the National Tourist Board of Costa Rica. Cocos is of particular importance because of its strategic position near the Panama Canal.

Historical and Political Development

On September 18, 1502, on his fourth and last voyage to the New World, Christopher Columbus discovered what is now Costa Rica when a sudden tempest drove his ship into Cariarí Bay. Columbus sent his brother Bartolomé to explore the land, which was inhabited by several tribes of Indians: the Chorotega, Boruca, Nahua, and Carib, each ruled by a *cacique* or chief.

The first Spanish settlement in Costa Rica was named Bruselas and was located on the Pacific Coast near the present site of Puntarenas. Unfortunately, like most of the "towns" which were no more than outposts, this one lasted only three years. Colonial history really begins with the rule of Juan Vásquez de Coronado, who in 1564 founded the first permanent city, Cartago. He envisioned this rich land peopled by peaceful homesteaders and carried out his dream by bringing fifty families from the provinces of Galicia and Aragón in Spain to the salubrious Meseta Central. He also brought cattle, horses, and swine to Costa Rica, and it is said that one of the first cattle ranches in the New World was established here.

Unfortunately, this peaceful conqueror was lost at sea during a return voyage to Spain and from this time the colony of Costa Rica was governed from Guatemala City by the Spanish Captaincy-General and the Royal Audiencia, a Spanish court of justice. These two governing bodies ruled the Central American region, at that time divided into eight provinces. The governor of the province of Costa Rica lived in Cartago, capital of the province. He was appointed for a five-year period and exercised political, military, and judicial authority. During the entire colonial period of about two-and-a-half centuries (1570-1821), both coasts of Costa Rica were frequently raided by the Mosquito Indians of Nicaragua and by the English and Dutch pirates. One of the greatest obstacles to economic progress was the stagnating effect of the mercantile policy pursued by Spain in the New World, which prevented any exchange of goods among the colonies themselves or between the colonies and any nation but Spain.

On September 15, 1821, without a drop of blood being

shed, the independence of the Central American colonies was declared at Guatemala City; a month later the last Spanish governor of Costa Rica resigned. In 1822, Costa Rica, together with the other Central American states, was annexed to the Mexican Empire under Agustín Iturbide. After a short life of one year, the Empire collapsed and once again each state was in a position to adopt its own form of government. In 1823, the five Central American provinces united to form the Federation of Central America. Costa Rica promulgated its first constitution on January 22, 1825.

The Federation continued to function until 1838, chiefly because of the zeal and ardent labors of its President, Francisco Morazán. However, consistent conservative opposition to this great liberal leader and other insurmountable difficulties brought about the dissolution of the Federation, and Morazán sought voluntary exile in South America. In 1842, in response to the appeal of Costa Ricans who wished to be freed from the rule of the conservative dictator Braulio Carrillo, Morazán returned to Costa Rica, forced Carrillo to abdicate, and became president of the country. He immediately began to make liberal reforms and attempted to revive the Federation of Central American States. Within a few months a conservative counter-revolt overthrew his regime and he was taken prisoner and executed.

In 1856 the independence of Costa Rica was threatened when the notorious William Walker attempted to seize several of the Central American countries and set up an empire. Juan Rafael Mora, the President of Costa Rica, was one of the foremost leaders in repulsing Walker and Mora is honored as Costa Rica's national hero.

The last of the republic's seven constitutions came into force in 1949. The first article declares that "Costa Rica is a free and independent democratic Republic." One of the outstanding features of this Constitution is the article which proscribes a national army as a permanent institution and states that the necessary police forces exist for the preservation of public order. Military force may be organized only by continental agreement or for national defense.



20 Statue of the boy hero, Juan Santamaría

Colonial ruins in Cartago



The three branches of government are: the legislative, executive, and judicial. As in all the Central American republics with the exception of Nicaragua, Costa Rica's legislative power is vested in a unicameral Legislative Assembly composed of 45 deputies elected directly by the people. The assembly meets in regular session twice a year—from the first of May to July 31 and from September first to November 30. Special sessions may be convoked by the president at any time.

The executive branch of the government is headed by the president who is assisted by a Cabinet, consisting of eight ministers. The president, who must be a native-born citizen over thirty years of age and of secular status, is elected directly by the people for a four-year term. He may not serve again as president within eight years after the expiration of his term. If the president should resign or be incapacitated, the executive power is entrusted to one of the two vice-presidents.

Judicial power is vested in the Supreme Court and the four appellate courts, which decide civil and criminal cases. The justices of the Supreme Court are elected by the Legislative Assembly for a term of eight years and are automatically reelected for like periods, unless the Assembly decides otherwise by a vote of two thirds of its entire membership. Judges of the lower courts are all appointed by the Supreme Court in its plenary sessions.

Customs and Culture

When the Spaniards first arrived in Costa Rica they found the Indian inhabitants relatively few in number and scattered. At that time the Spaniards estimated the Indian population at not more than 25,000. The tribes were agricultural, raising such crops as corn, beans, yucca, and cotton. They were also skilled in the arts of weaving, pottery making, stone carving, and fashioning the golden ornaments which led the Spaniards to believe that they had indeed found a "rich coast." While the Indians were friendly to their conquerors at first, they later became more and more hostile, refusing to be subjugated. Constant warfare weakened both sides and eventually the Indians sought refuge in the impenetrable jungle in order to survive. Today the pure Indian population averages less than two per cent.



An outstanding example of Chorotega art

Because Costa Rica is the southernmost of the Central American republics and was long isolated from its neighbors on either side, it developed in a different manner from the other countries, escaping the numerous conflicts that arose in many other Spanish colonies; thus its colonial history was unusually peaceful.

The customs and culture of Costa Rica exhibit many European characteristics because, in addition to the descendants of the original Spanish settlers many immigrants came from Germany and Austria and established themselves in the cool mountain valleys reminiscent of their homeland. These people worked hard to build up the country and contributed much to the economic, social, and cultural growth of the nation.

Art

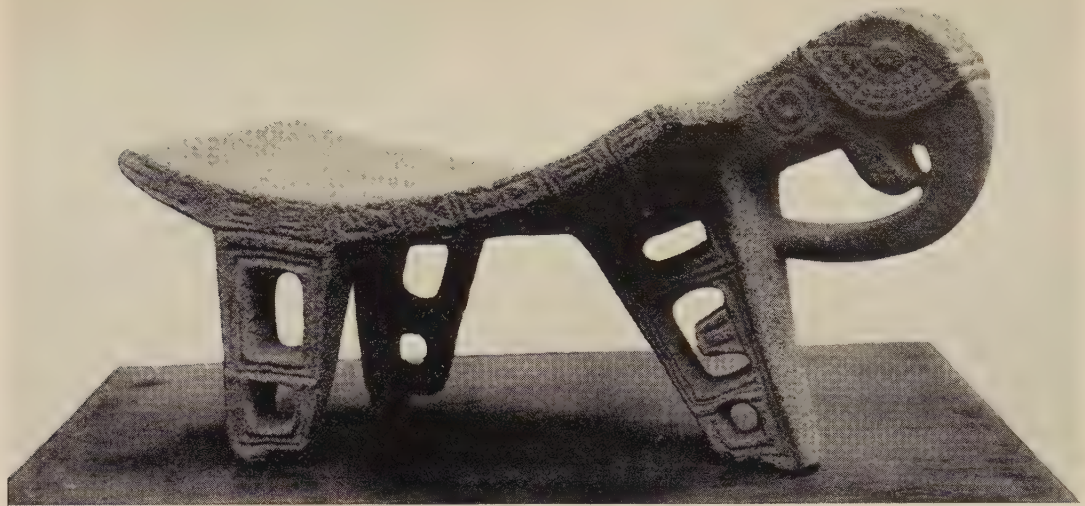
The natives inhabiting Costa Rica in the preconquest era were excellent craftsmen in creating gold and jade ornaments, pottery, and stone sculpture. Mayan characteristics can be seen in the exquisite pottery and carved jade tooled by the Chorotega tribe, which excelled all the others in this work. The Borucas, who inhabited the southwestern part of Costa Rica, produced a brown textile woven in such a fashion that the design appeared only on the right side of the material. This art is being revived today.

Distinctive among all the American countries is the art of the Costa Rican peasantry. Intricate geometrical designs painted in vivid colors decorate their oxcarts and add a great deal to the charm and color of the countryside. These patterns, which have been handed down from one generation to the other, form a brilliant kaleidoscope as the cart wheels rotate. While Spanish Colonial and Renaissance architectural styles predominate in the majority of churches and public buildings, the newer edifices in San José are modern in design. The Municipal Palace, completed in 1937, exemplifies the new trend toward modern architecture.

Sculpture and painting have not been too prominent among the arts in Costa Rica until recent years. The School of Fine Arts of Costa Rica was founded in 1897 and for 49 years was directed by the Spanish painter,



One of the pre-Columbian
relics displayed in the
National Museum



A unique example of ancient stone carving

Tomás Podevano. Enrique Echandi, was the first Costa Rican artist to be trained in Europe and was followed by many others. Among them are Max Jiménez, painter, sculptor, writer, and lover of the artistic atmosphere of his native land, who made a great contribution to the arts in several fields. His art is distinctive in its feeling for line and exaggeration of form. International recognition, bestowed upon the painter Francisco Amighetti and the sculptors Juan Manuel Sanchez, Juan Rafael Chacón, and Francisco Zuñiga gave impetus to their media of artistic expression. Other well-known artists of this period are the painters Manuel de la Cruz Gonzáles, Margarita Berthaud, Flora Luján, Federico Quiróz, and Manuel Salazar; and the sculptor Juan Portugués.

The new generation of artists includes realists, surrealists, and abstractionists. Worthy of mention are Emilio Willie, César Valverde, Harold Fonseca, Luis Deel, Guillermo Jiménez, Lola Fernández and Oscar Bakit.

Literature

Since the early colonial period Costa Rica has produced a number of poets, novelists, historians, philosophers, grammarians, and archaeologists, all of whom have become well-known through the Spanish-speaking countries. The peaceful, democratic philosophy of life of the Costa Rican people is exemplified in the national literature.

One of Costa Rica's most versatile writers, Roberto Brenes Mesén, found time during his active public career as an educator to publish some excellent translations including Maeterlinck's *The Blue Bird* and Gibran's *The Prophet*. His work *En El Silencio* followed the modernist school of "art for art's sake," and his genius is clearly shown in his essays, reviews, language treatises, and textbooks which are still being read today.

Costa Rican writers excel in the realistic form of expression called in Spanish *costumbrismo*, which describes the everyday life of the peasantry, often in the vernacular. It has been said of this form of literature that "one volume gives a better picture of Costa Rican life than twenty volumes of statistics." Two men were the precursors of this realistic movement: Manuel Argüello Mora, author of many novels and short stories on people and customs, and the priest-poet, Juan Garita, whose verses are filled with subtle irony. Both of these men were the real innovators of the Costa Rican folklore movement.

Aquileo J. Echevarría is honored as the "National Poet of Costa Rica." His brilliant folk sketches of the people of his native land have contributed a permanent legacy to national literature. Echevarría possessed keen powers of observation and an expert ability to express himself in rhythmic verse. His life was one of constant service to his country, both as a journalist and later as a diplomatic representative. His best remembered volume of

poetry is *Concherías* (Country Folkways), published first in 1905. The finest edition of this work was published in 1948 by the Guatemalan Government as part of a collection entitled *Los Clásicos del Istmo*.

Another of the republic's great poets is Alfredo Cardona Peña, who has published several volumes of verse, among them *El Mundo que tú Eres*, *Valle de México*, *Crónica en Saga*, and *Poemas Numerales* which won the Central American "15 de septiembre" Prize in 1950. He has also written significant essays and critical studies and has taken an active interest in literary journalism. One of Costa Rica's most gifted poets is Eunive Odio, who has also won the "15 de septiembre" award. Among her better known works are *Los Elementos Terrestres* and the long surrealist poem, *El Tránsito de Fuego*.

El Sitio de las Abras, written by Fabián Dobles, a realist social writer who depicts the current native scene in a vigorous style, is regarded as one of the outstanding Central American novels of the past decade. Abelardo Bonilla is considered the foremost living authority on Costa Rican literature. Among his contributions in this field are several philosophical essays, including *La Crisis del Humanismo* and *Conocimiento, Verdad y Belleza*. In the latter he rejects the rationalistic idealism and scientific naturalism of the last century, as well as the existentialism of present time, as incapable of solving the problem of the relationship between man and the world. Refuting these trends, he puts forth a thesis that is essentially humanistic in nature.

The principal newspapers of the country are the dailies *Diario de Costa Rica*, *La Nación*, *La República*, *La Prensa Libre*, *Diario Nacional*, *Ultima Noticia*, and *La Hora*.

Music and Folklore

Remnants of Indian music which have been preserved through the years indicate that the aborigines possessed a variety of instruments, some of which are still in use. The most unusual is the *ocarina* with six finger holes, an instrument used by the Huetars, who succeeded in producing 18 successive notes on it; the *quijongo*, a cylindrical drum made of wood and animal skins, punctuated their musical themes. Later on, civil and religious festi-

vals were accompanied by the *chirimia*, a kind of oboe borrowed from the Europeans. Costa Rica has several distinctive forms of popular music which are sung and danced in country districts and often at parties in the cities. Mexican music is very popular.

Guanacaste Province best preserves the traditional folk music and dances of Costa Rica. The guitar and the marimba lend accompaniment to couples performing the *Punto Guanacasteco*, a dance which typifies the spirit of Costa Rican life. Gay and spirited with a great deal of musical originality and irregular rhythm, this dance has been proclaimed the national dance of the country. The *danza* is a creole dance, depicting the joys, sorrows, and hopes of the people with expressive body movements and gestures. Using Guanacastecan themes, the composer Roberto Cantillano wrote a symphonic poem of popular folklore entitled *Amanecer Guanacasteco* (Guanacastecan Dawn). Other types of music which are very popular are the *callejeras*, music with many diversified forms—gay, romantic, sweet, and sad; the *tamborito* and *floreo*; and patriotic music.

An excellent survey of Costa Rican songs and dances has been published in two collections: *Colección de Bailes Típicos de la Provincia de Guanacaste* (Collection of Typical Dances of Guanacaste Province) and *Colección de Canciones y Danzas Típicas* (Collection of Typical Songs and Dances) in two volumes.

Until the National Conservatory of Music was established in 1943, Costa Rican students had to go abroad for their training. This experience gave them the technical skill required; however, their compositions reveal that their inspiration and themes have always been rooted in their native land. Styles in composition range from the classical and the traditional to the modern. Julio Mata Oreamuno employs the latter style in his symphonic composition *Suite Abstracta*.

Every form of musical expression, both instrumental and vocal, has been used by Costa Rican composers. Among the outstanding religious compositions is Rafael Chávez Torres' funeral march *El Duelo de la Patria*. The various musical structures employed by some of Costa Rica's leading composers are demonstrated in the operetta



Students relax between classes at the University of Costa Rica

Toyupán by Oreamuno; *Fantasia Sinfónica*, a symphony of Costa Rican themes by Julio Fonseca Gutiérrez; and the ballet *La Piedra del Toxil* by César A. Nieto.

Other distinguished musicians who represent Costa Rica are Guillermo Aguilar Machado, pianist and director of the National Conservatory of Music; Raúl Cabezas Duffner, noted violinist; Daniel Zuñiga, who has been instrumental in collecting and popularizing the national folk music; Alejandro Monestel, an outstanding composer who wrote church and concert music as well as many popular tunes; and Carlos Enrique Vargas, pianist and organist, who was a former conductor of the National Symphony Orchestra.

Various musical organizations in Costa Rica offer excellent cultural opportunities to the people. The Musical Culture Association sponsors local artists and also brings world-famous artists to the national capital for concerts. This organization is also the sponsor of an *cappella* chorus of fifty voices called *Orfeón*, which is directed by Nieto. The government-subsidized National Symphony Orchestra not only performs in the National Theater but also gives regular daytime concerts for school children each month.

Military and municipal bands perform throughout the republic. Seven of these bands, one for each province, are supported by the government. In addition there are about eighty small municipal bands which play for official functions, religious occasions, schools and other organizations. Evening and Sunday band concerts are held regularly in the local parks.

Education

Costa Rica's primary and secondary educational systems are among the best in Latin America. For more than a century the government has boasted of having more teachers than soldiers, more school buildings than barracks. This accounts for Costa Rica's low illiteracy—one of the lowest in the Hemisphere. Public education is under the direction of the Ministry of Education and school attendance is free, nonsectarian, and compulsory for children between the ages of seven and fourteen years. The state is required by law to provide educational



Uniformed girl students in San José

facilities for physically and mentally handicapped children, such as the School of Special Instruction in San José which prepares children for trades and occupations in later life. In recent years a concerted effort has been made to establish kindergarten and nursery schools as part of the elementary school system or as separate institutions.

There are three types of elementary schools in Costa Rica. Class I and Class II schools are found principally in urban areas. Class I schools offer a full six-year elementary course, while Class II schools have only a five year course. In rural areas Class III schools predominate, giving from one to four years of elementary instruction. Study courses are divided into two classes of subjects: the fundamentals, including mathematics, science, language, and geography and history; and special subjects, embracing art, music, sewing, cooking, manual training, agriculture, and physical education. A certificate awarded at the end of the six-year course entitles a student to enter a secondary school. The school year generally runs from the first of March to the end of November.

For many years secondary schools were found only on the populous Central Plateau, but by 1946 there were secondary schools in every province of the country. Since 1944 English has been a part of the required curriculum in both primary and secondary schools. The fundamental courses in the secondary schools are very similar to those offered in junior and senior high schools in the United States. At the end of five years of study a comprehensive examination is given, half oral and half written. The title of Bachelor of Science and Letters is conferred upon those students who successfully complete this examination.

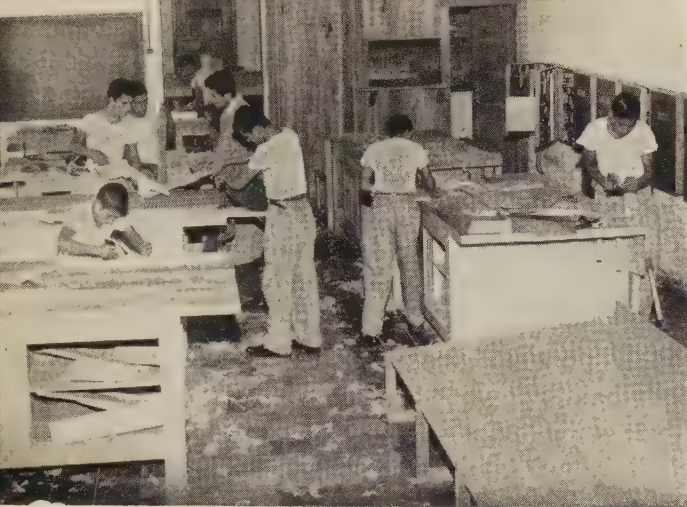
There are numerous evening schools both on the elementary and secondary levels for students who work during the day; the majority of the evening classes are of a commercial nature. There are also several private commercial schools and a government-operated school of commerce, which offers a four-year course in such fields as office management, banking and accounting, shorthand, typing and bookkeeping.



A vocational education class

The Normal School of Costa Rica, located in Heredia, is a modern, coeducational institution. Upon completion of the regular five-year secondary school program, a student may take a two-year course here and receive a certificate of *maestro normal*, which entitles one to become an elementary school teacher. There is also a Teachers College at the University of Costa Rica.

The University of Santo Tomás was founded in San José in 1843, but it was abolished in 1888 by an act of the Legislative Assembly. However, its Faculty of Law continued under the Ministry of Public Education and later was placed under the jurisdiction of the bar association. The University of Costa Rica was officially opened in 1941, incorporating the schools of law, pharmacy, agriculture, education, fine arts, engineering, sciences, liberal arts, and dentistry. These schools are now housed in the new modern University City in San Pedro, a suburb of San José, where the School of Agriculture had previously been established. A School of Medicine will be opened in the near future.



A shop in the Vocational School, Alajuela

SOCIAL PROGRESS

Public Health

Social Progress

Costa Rica has long been known as a country with a generally high standard of living and good working conditions. Social progress has been advancing steadily on all levels over a long period of time.

Public Health

Health work in Costa Rica is centralized under the Ministry of Public Health, which is responsible for the physical and mental well-being of all Costa Ricans. The 65 municipalities of the republic are required to devote 20 per cent of their income to public health work.

One of the most important developments in the field of public health has been the establishment of health centers throughout the country, especially in the rural areas. Through them, maternal and child welfare work and examination and treatment for intestinal parasitosis, malaria, and the like are conducted; and vaccinations for smallpox, typhoid, and diphtheria are given. The health centers have small maternity wards and where there are no such centers a health officer is appointed. In addition to the hospitals and health centers, there are children's clinics located throughout the republic. The Central Laboratory, which has established branch laboratories in many of the health centers in order to handle local services, is doing invaluable work in the field of public health.

There are about 40 hospitals and clinics in the principal cities and towns and new hospitals are under construction. Among the outstanding hospitals are San Juan de Dios General, the Tuberculosis Hospital, the Carit Maternity Hospital, Chapui Mental Institution, and the National Children's Hospital which is being built at the present time. The International Cooperation Administration of the U.S. Department of State is cooperating with the Costa Rican Government through the Public Health Service in training technicians to coordinate hospital and nursing facilities.

Labor and Social Welfare

The well-being of the laboring class of Costa Rica has been consistently improved under the leadership of the

It is noteworthy that the Constitution of the Republic designates the University as an autonomous institution and provides that it shall receive not less than ten per cent of the annual budget of the Ministry of Public Education. The Constitution further stipulates that "freedom in teaching is a fundamental principle of university instruction."

San José offers an extensive program of cultural activities to all. Foreign as well as native artists perform before large audiences in the National Theater. The National Museum, founded in 1886, contains important historical and archeological records of Costa Rica's past. Among its outstanding exhibits are a collection of Central American pottery, relics of pre-Colombian civilizations, and records of colonial history. The National Library serves as the center of library activities throughout the country. Its collection of 100,000 or more volumes is consulted by readers of all ages. There are also libraries in the capitals of each of the provinces and other cities.

Familiarity with the language, customs and cultural achievements of both Costa Rica and the United States¹ is fostered through the Costa Rican-North American Cultural Center, located in the capital of the republic. Through language classes, lectures, concerts and informal social gatherings, the peoples of the two nations are brought into a closer cultural relationship.

Ministry of Labor and Social Welfare. The Labor Code, which is the basic labor law in effect at present, was promulgated in 1943 and has since been amended frequently. In addition to the liberal provisions contained in the Constitution, this law regulates all matters concerning relations between workers and employers, provides for mediation in labor disputes, regulates wages, and requires that labor and employer organizations be registered.

There are many labor organizations working for the betterment of their members, among them worker syndicates, federations, and confederations. Employer organizations, called *sindicatos patronales*, are also very active. The largest and strongest workers' groups are the Confederation of Workers of Costa Rica (CTCR) and the Central de Sindicatos Costarricenses Rerum Novarum.

In September 1953 the Ministry of Labor and Social Security set up a commission to organize seminars for workers and employers for the purpose of developing workers' education. The Commission is made up of one representative each from the Ministry of Labor and Social Security, the Ministry of Education, the University of Costa Rica, and the Costa Rican Labor Confederation.

A National Council on Wages and Salaries was established in November 1949, to operate under the Ministry of Labor and Social Security. All wages are reviewed annually by the Mixed Commissions on Minimum Wages which have three functions: to recommend wage rates within the province over which they have jurisdiction to the Ministry of Labor and Social Security, through the General Labor Office; to see that the decrees fixing wages are effectively enforced; and to investigate petitions for wage revisions.

The Costa Rican legislature approved a Social Security Act in 1949 to implement the National Social Security Fund which was established in October 1943. The Social Security Administration is charged with the enforcement of compulsory social security and with increasing its voluntary application in the republic. Insurance benefits cover disability, old age, death, unemployment, sickness, and maternity.



Durán Sanitarium near Irazú Volcano

The Social Security Fund has a social service section which organizes, directs, and coordinates the activities of social workers in the various fields of public assistance. This section also coordinates the activities of the Fund with other public and private welfare organizations and acts as a consulting service for those seeking assistance. The graduates and students of the Social Service School of the University of Costa Rica work for the Fund, primarily in the fields of health and housing.

Social welfare projects under private auspices are frequently supported with funds raised through lotteries. The Social Protection Board distributes money from the National Charity Lottery among the hospitals, correctional institutions, and sanitariums. The National Child Welfare League concerns itself with the problem of abandoned and delinquent minors.

Housing Cooperatives ECONOMIC GROWTH

Housing

The National Housing and City Planning Institute, created in 1954, is entrusted with planning and constructing houses, particularly for low-income families. In an effort to alleviate the serious lack of low-cost housing and to develop the rural areas, this agency was given broad powers including elimination of slums; financing, promoting, establishing, and relocating industries; and planning housing construction as well as whole communities.

The Institute's broad objective is to aid in bettering the economic and social conditions of the people. The board which directs this agency is composed of five members: the Ministry of Labor and Social Welfare acting as director, *ex-officio*, and four technicians who are named by the government. In order to promote better use of the land in developing cities and towns, the Institute plans projects with community services located in areas easily accessible.

The goal of this agency is to erect annually a minimum of 1,000 units having two bedrooms, kitchen, living room, and bath. In order to encourage home ownership, the government does not charge any land tax to persons who are buying these houses or paying off loans which they have secured either from private sources or the Institute.

Cooperatives

The cooperative movement is an important factor in the economic and social progress of the Costa Rican people, particularly in the agricultural regions. The Department of Cooperatives functions under the National Bank of Costa Rica, with six different types of cooperatives represented: agricultural, consumer, credit housing, services, and transportation. Their member associations total more than 6,300. The agricultural cooperatives including those for producers of milk, poultry, cacao, tobacco, and coffee, and for agricultural industry and agricultural machinery have the largest number of member associations, with 2,444. The other cooperative associations number as follows: consumer, 2,064; credit, 1,527; housing, 528; transportation, 158; and services, 123.

Economic Growth

Agriculture is Costa Rica's major economic activity, employing considerably more than half of the country's working population. Agricultural products, including livestock, far outrank commerce and industry in importance and account for almost two fifths of the national income and more than 95 per cent of the total value of Costa Rica's exports. The government's long-range economic development program provides for the expansion of industry, strengthening agriculture, and new projects in public housing, sanitation, and public health.

Of major importance to the national economy is the plan for a Central American economic community, which is being promoted by the Organization of Central American States (ODECA) composed of Costa Rica and the four neighboring republics. The formation of a Central American customs union, a common market, and a system of industrial integration are the principal objectives of the plan. To this end, Costa Rica joined the other four republics in signing in 1958 the Multilateral Treaty on Free Trade and Central American Economic Integration and the Convention for a System of Integrated Central American Industries.

Agriculture and Livestock

Among the specific problems that have hindered increased agricultural production are lack of modern machinery, inadequate transportation facilities, failure to use the arable land to the best advantage, and the continued need for agricultural credit. Agricultural production as a whole is failing to keep pace with the advances being made in other sectors of the national economy, although there has been excellent progress in some activities such as dairy farming, cattle raising, and poultry production. The government is making an effort to diversify the economy of the country and to reduce its dependence on coffee, the principal export commodity.

The National Production Council has a program for stimulating agricultural production. This important agency prevents undue fluctuations in farm prices and has undertaken many activities concerned with the storage, processing, and distribution of basic food crops.

Agriculture and Livestock

Its operations have had a beneficial effect on the economic development of Costa Rica in recent years. Another important agency is STICA (Inter-American Technical Service for Agricultural Cooperation), sponsored by the governments of Costa Rica and the United States. STICA's activities include extension programs, soil conservation, the expansion of agricultural credit, and other projects designed to make Costa Rica self-sufficient in its basic crops, thereby reducing imports of food products.

Agricultural expansion is encouraged by the loan policy of the nationalized banking system, with maximum amounts for agricultural loans fixed at a high figure. A characteristic of Costa Rican farming is the large number of small farms, particularly on the Central Plateau; in coastal areas large fincas, or plantations, are common. The system of small landholders is preserved chiefly by the 47 Rural Credit Boards which are located throughout the country. Their principal function is to provide short- and medium-term loans at a low interest rate to small farmers.

For many years the principal commercial crops have been coffee, bananas, and cacao. These three products generally represent 80 per cent or more of the total value of Costa Rica's exports. Recently cattle and beef exports have moved into third place. Sugar, corn, tobacco, beans, rice, potatoes, and a large variety of fruits are also grown, principally for domestic use. Lumber is important domestically and as an export item.

Costa Rica was the first country in Central America to grow coffee. The first trees were imported in 1797, and within 70 years coffee had become the country's most important crop. Today Costa Rica ranks third in production among the Central American countries, after El Salvador and Guatemala. Coffee is grown throughout the country, but the principal producing regions are the uplands of San José, Cartago, Alajuela, and Heredia provinces. Most of the coffee is grown on small farms of less than 25 acres, although there are some large coffee fincas.

The coffee region is an interesting section of the country to visit, either from May to July, when the bright waxy-



Harvesting coffee berries

Coffee is Costa Rica's major export



leafed coffee trees are in bloom and their white blossoms perfume the surrounding air, or in December when the berries are being harvested. At this time the coffee pickers—including men, women, and children with baskets tied to their waists—go from tree to tree, gently rubbing each branch so that the ripe red berries fall into the baskets. When these containers are filled they are taken to the waiting oxcarts where the contents are measured and the picker is paid. The carts deliver the berries to the *beneficio*, or mill, dumping them into huge vats filled with water; then the berries are passed through the water to crushing machines so that the pulp and skins may be removed from the pods.

After fermenting for 24 hours the coffee honey is removed and the mixture washed again. As the grains slip from their shell they are spread out in concrete yards under the sun in layers several inches deep and raked continually, usually for three or four days so that they dry thoroughly. The inner parchment-like cover is then removed by polishing machines and the coffee is taken to hand-pickers, who sort, grade and pack it in bags for shipping. When the last sack of coffee has been shipped there is usually a big fiesta on the plantation, with all participating in gay songs and dances. It is at such fiestas that you may see many of the traditional dances, among them the *baile suelto*, an especially romantic dance varied by poetic recitations.

The annual coffee crop averaged between fifty and seventy million pounds for many years until 1957-58, when the yield increased by approximately 40 per cent. This was due mainly to new plantings and more effective methods of cultivation and fertilization. The 1959-60 crop established a new high record. Costa Rican coffee is noted for its high quality and excellent flavor, characteristics which have kept its price at a high level in comparison with many other types.

The production of coffee, the country's most important economic activity, is almost exclusively in the hands of Costa Ricans. The industry is protected and promoted by the Coffee Bureau, a semi-official organization created in 1935. This agency engages in research, maintains experimental farms, and publishes a monthly maga-

zine containing valuable information on coffee culture and statistics; it also plays an important part in the regulation of the coffee trade. Costa Rica is a signatory of the International Coffee Agreement and an active member of the Coffee Federation of Central America and Mexico (FEDECAME).

Bananas have for years ranked second to coffee as an export product. Although the fruit was introduced into the New World in early colonial times and was grown in various Caribbean regions, Costa Rica was the first country in Central America to produce it for export. The banana industry was initiated on a commercial scale in 1875 and the first exports were shipped in 1878. Plantings and harvests are staggered throughout the four seasons. Prior to 1941 bananas were cultivated on the Atlantic coastal plains, where the heavy rainfall provided the quantities of water essential to their growth. After 1913 various diseases caused a decline in production; this led the United Fruit Company, the major producer and exporter, to shift its operations to the Pacific lowlands in the southern part of Puntarenas Province. Production climbed steadily until 1958, when more than 8,500,000 stems valued at over \$26,000,000 were exported, but fell off sharply in 1959 due to the loss of almost two million plants from "blow-downs." Much of the land withdrawn from banana production due to diseases is now being utilized profitably for the cultivation of cacao and African oil palms.

Unlike the coffee industry, banana production is carried on almost exclusively by foreign concerns, of which the United Fruit Company is by far the largest. Independent growers now supply upwards of 15 per cent of the total exports shipped by Cía. Bananera de Costa Rica, subsidiary of the United Fruit Company. Most of the banana crop is exported from the Pacific Coast ports of Golfito and Quepos. Puerto Limón serves the Atlantic side.

Costa Rica is one of the seven Latin American countries which produce one third of the world's cacao, from which chocolate is made. Cacao has been raised in Costa Rica for centuries, ever since the Aztec Nahua tribes brought the seeds with them from Mexico in the fourteenth century. Its modern importance dates from 1914, when



Bananas rank second to coffee as an export product

former banana lands were planted with cacao trees. Except for a small section on the Pacific Coast, all the plantations are located in the lowlands adjacent to Puerto Limón on the Atlantic side.

Two crops are harvested yearly, the principal one between October and December and the second one between May and June. While less important than the coffee and bananas, cacao exports bring a substantial amount of revenue. Although the output of cacao has been declining for more than a decade, present conditions are more favorable for an increase in crops due to improvements in cultivation and the control of diseases.

An important factor in the national economy is the growth of the livestock industry. Exports of cattle on the hoof and fresh and frozen beef have tripled in the last few years. The government has instituted a special program for improving both the size and quality of its cattle herds with particular attention to the export market. Guanacaste Province is the principal beef cattle region and there is a growing cattle industry in the San Carlos basin of the Atlantic lowlands.

A new ultra-modern slaughterhouse in operation since 1958 is equipped to handle more than a third of the annual marketable beef production of the country. This and several other modernized slaughterhouses were particularly needed, since about 22 per cent more cattle were slaughtered in 1959 than in the preceding year. Costa Rican dairy cattle are superior to the average stock and are among the most carefully selected in the world. The dairy industry has developed along the western slopes of the volcanoes, particularly Irazú in the province of Cartago. Various agricultural experiment projects aim at improving cattle feed during the dry season, when pastures are unfit for grazing.

Crops grown for domestic consumption include sugar, rice, beans, corn, potatoes, garden vegetables, fruits, and tobacco. Sugar, raised chiefly in the provinces of Alajuela and Cartago, is of two types—plantation white and *panela*, a coarse brown loaf sugar. As in most Caribbean countries, rice and beans are favorites in the Costa Rican diet. New crops that have developed rapidly in Costa Rica in the last decade include the African oil

Industrial Progress

palm and improved varieties of market vegetables and fruits. Important among plants raised for medicinal purposes are *cinchona* (source of quinine) and *ipecac*, used in the treatment of amoebic dysentery.

The forest resources of Costa Rica are extensive, though virtually untapped. *Cativo*, a soft wood used in the manufacture of plywood, is the principal wood exported, followed by cedar. Smaller amounts of balsa, mahogany, guayacán, fustic, cocobolo, brazilwood, ebony, rosewood, and valuable dyewoods are also shipped abroad.

Costa Rica has made notable progress in solving the problems which a growing population has brought to the national economy. The School of Agriculture of the University of Costa Rica conducts experimental work and research, in addition to training farmers. A rural colonization program aims to stop farm-to-city migration and to increase farm production. Semi-abandoned farm land is being opened to settlement and equipped with housing and machinery.

The Inter-American Institute of Agricultural Sciences, located at Turrialba, was founded in 1944 and has operated under the Charter of the Organization of American States since 1948. The primary purpose of the Institute is to encourage and advance all branches of agriculture through research and education for the benefit of all the American republics. The headquarters of this institution are located in a region that encompasses not only the rich, volcanic plateau area, but also tropical portions of the Reventazón River valley. Extensive research is conducted to improve existing crop production, soil conservation, and livestock breeding and productivity.

Industrial Progress

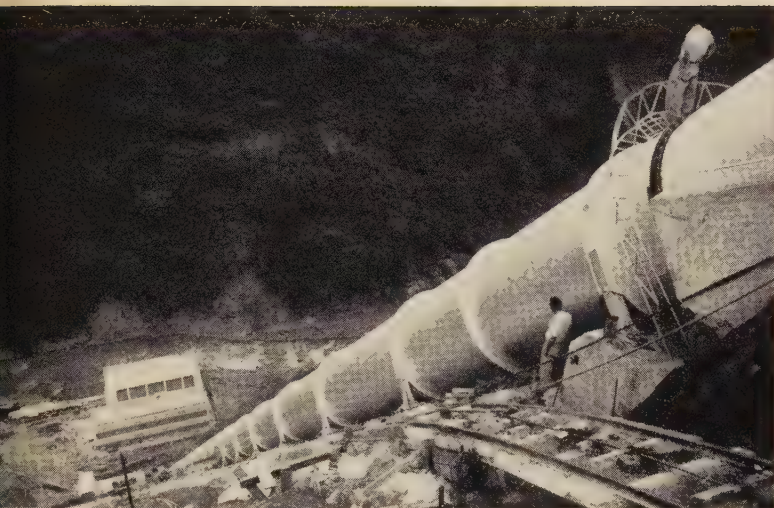
Costa Rica has little or no heavy industry. Because agriculture is still the principal economic activity, many of the manufacturing industries are based on the processing of agricultural products such as foodstuffs, beverages, and edible oils.

The rapid expansion of light industry in recent years has been largely facilitated by increased imports of machinery and equipment, which have more than doubled

within the last five years. Manufacturing for the period 1950-56 increased by 60 per cent, about twice the growth rate of the agricultural sector of the economy. This has made possible the manufacture of a wide variety of consumer goods for the domestic market, including cigarettes and cigars, rubber products, construction materials, cosmetics, plastics, paints, fertilizers, insecticides, textiles, clothing, and furniture. Some of these industries import semifinished materials. The number of commercial establishments has increased from 8,300 to approximately 9,800 during the last eight years, according to a recent census. Recently a new nylon hosiery plant went into volume production and the construction of a soluble coffee plant was started. Plans are being made for the establishment of new fertilizer, textile, and paper factories, and a new oil refinery.

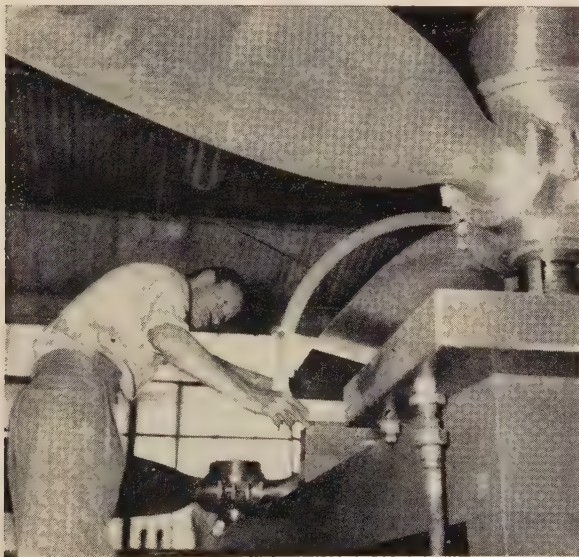
The further expansion of industry has been greatly stimulated by passage of a new Law of Industrial Protection and Development, which became effective in September 1959. The law provides strong incentives for the establishment of new industries by granting substantial reductions or exemptions from various taxes including customs duties on certain imports, land taxes, and export taxes under specific conditions. Established industries will also benefit under the new law, which operates on the basis of contracts signed with the government through the Ministry of Agriculture and Industries. The law also provides for a Consultative and Coordinating Commission for Industrial Development, which is entrusted with the application of the law's provisions.

The majority of industrial and manufacturing enterprises are privately owned by Costa Ricans and there are probably no more than three foreign concerns with investments of more than a million dollars. A recent investment in this field is the large meatpacking plant near Puntarenas which a United States firm completed in 1958. The government has a monopoly on the manufacture of all alcoholic drinks except beer, and distilleries of alcoholic and non-alcoholic beverages are among the largest industries in Costa Rica; this is the only important government-owned enterprise. Industries utilizing leather and hides, such as tanning, shoemaking, and saddlery, supply domestic needs. Textiles and clothing are manu-



Partial view of La Garita Electric Plant

Aviation maintenance is an important industry in San José



factured locally from domestic cotton as well as from imported raw materials. The textile industry also includes rayon weaving mills. Cabinet makers use native cedar, mahogany, and rosewood for furniture.

A unique industry in Costa Rica is the airplane maintenance service, *Servicios Aerotécnicos Latino Americanos* (SALA), which services planes of domestic airlines and international airlines, and private, public, and military planes throughout Latin America. This industry was developed with the aid of United States capital and its standard of work has been fully certified by the U.S. Civil Aeronautics Authority. All but two of its 400 employees are Costa Ricans and SALA is the country's fifth largest foreign exchange earner after coffee, bananas, cattle, and cacao.

Costa Rica's abundant water power facilities are being developed in order to meet the increasing demand for electric power, which is inadequate. About 75 per cent of the power supply is generated by hydroelectric plants, most of which are located in the Central Plateau. In 1958 a 30,000-kilowatt hydroelectric plant was inaugurated at La Garita, harnessing the power of the Tizate, Alajuela, and Grande de Tarcoles rivers.

Foreign Trade

Costa Rica's economy, like that of most Latin American countries, is dependent on its foreign trade. Coffee accounts for about 55 per cent of Costa Rica's total exports and bananas, around 29 per cent; the balance of the country's export trade consists mainly of cattle, dressed beef, cacao, vegetable shortening, corn, beans, rice, sugar, and insecticides. Cacao exports have generally ranked third in importance following coffee and bananas. However, in 1959, the value of cacao exports was exceeded by that of frozen beef and live cattle for the first time.

The value of exports increased from \$55,000,000 in 1950 to \$79,681,000 in 1959. Imports during the same period increased from \$46,000,000 to \$102,654,000. Since 1955 the country has had an unfavorable balance of trade. Costa Rica's principal imports are machinery, vehicles, iron and steel, chemicals and pharmaceuticals, metal

manufacturers, combustibles and lubricants, paper products, cement and lime, wheat flour, and miscellaneous food products.

The geographical distribution of Costa Rica's foreign trade has changed gradually during the last decade. Although the bulk of the country's trade continues to be with the United States, the latter's share of the total has been progressively declining, while trade with Western European nations has been steadily increasing. Another significant trend is the slow but steady rise of trade between Costa Rica and the other Central American republics.

During World War II almost all of the coffee crop was exported to the United States. Since the European market reopened, the greatest demand has come from there, especially from West Germany which takes about 50 per cent of the total exports. In terms of value, exports to West Germany, consisting mainly of coffee, rose from 1.7 per cent in 1952 to 24.1 per cent of the total in 1957, while exports to the United States declined from 71.6 per cent to 51.6 per cent in the same period. Imports from the United States declined from 62.9 per cent in 1952 to 55.2 per cent in 1957 and those from West Germany rose from 6.8 per cent to 9.2 per cent for that period. While Costa Rica does not impose quantitative restrictions on imports, it applies a dual exchange rate and high import duties on the importation of non-essential goods and luxury items.

Banking and Public Finance

Costa Rica has had a nationalized banking system since 1948. In addition to the Central Bank of Costa Rica, there are four State (commercial) banks which function as autonomous public institutions. The Central Bank, created in 1950, holds the reserve deposits of the commercial banks, lends to them and rediscounts their credits, and formulates general banking policy. The State banks are governed by boards of directors appointed by the Council of Government; their profits accrue to the banking system and not to the National Treasury. A small private bank also belongs to the national banking system. Private banks must be organized as corporations and must be authorized by the Central Bank.

In addition to the banks, there are other important autonomous institutes including the Costa Rican Institute of Electricity, the National Institute of Housing and Urbanization, the National Production Council, and the National Insurance Institute. These institutions are playing an increasingly important role in the national economy.

The monetary unit of Costa Rica is the *colón*, named in honor of Christopher Columbus (Cristóbal Colón in Spanish). The *colón* is divided into 100 *céntimos*. Nickel coins are minted in 25 and 50 *céntimos* and one and two *colón* denominations; alloy steel coins are in 5 and 10 *céntimos*. Paper money is issued in notes of 5, 10, 20, 50, 100, 500, and 1,000 colones. The Central Bank has the exclusive right to issue banknotes and coins.

Costa Rica has a dual foreign exchange system with an official rate of 5.60 colones to the U.S. dollar and a controlled free buying rate, which has remained unchanged since 1952 at about one *colón* over the official rate. Exchange is available at the official rate for necessary imports, government transactions, and for other specified purposes. The free market rate applies to other foreign exchange expenditures. To promote the development of new export products and to assist existing exports faced with marketing difficulties, the Central Bank, which regulates credit and foreign exchange, is authorized to grant permits for the sale at the free market rate of up to 99 per cent of the exchange earnings from any export product. Despite the trade imbalance, foreign exchange reserves showed a tendency to rise during 1960.

The national budget has increased steadily during the last decade and totaled roughly 350,000,000 colones for 1960. In accordance with the government's long-established policy, the Ministry of Education receives the largest single budget appropriation, generally approximating 20 per cent of the total; large sums are also granted to the various autonomous institutes. Two thirds of the revenues of the country are derived from indirect taxes, with import duties generally accounting for more than 50 per cent and direct taxes on income around ten per cent.

Communications

Costa Rica's highway system, comprising slightly more than 6,000 miles of roads, is concentrated in the Central Plateau. Other sections of the country which are inaccessible by road or railroad, depend chiefly on domestic airlines for connections with the major cities and ports. Thus an extension of the present network and a system of feeder roads is of major importance to the economic development of large areas of the country.

Road construction is progressing, including work on the uncompleted sector of the Inter-American Highway between San Isidro del General and the Panamanian border. About 600 miles of the total highway system are of asphalt or concrete construction; 1,096 miles have a gravel surface and are passable the year round; and the remaining 4,360 miles are of dirt. The Costa Rican section of the Pan American Highway (called the Inter-American Highway in Central America) will be 408 miles long when finished. The completed sector of almost 300 miles is either paved or of all-weather construction.

Railway communications are limited to about 700 miles of trackage, operated by three companies. The Northern Railway Company links San José with Puerto Limón on the Atlantic Coast; the Pacific Electric Company operates from San José to the Pacific port of Puntarenas; and a railway network run by the United Fruit Company serves the banana ports of Quepos and Golfito.

Only a few of Costa Rica's many rivers are navigable. The San Juan River, which serves as a natural boundary between Costa Rica and Nicaragua for a considerable distance, is navigable from the Caribbean to Lake Nicaragua. In isolated regions such as Guanacaste, rivers provide the chief routes of communication, even though they are navigable by small craft only.

Air transport has developed rapidly in Costa Rica and is an important factor in economic development. The national airline, Líneas Aéreas Costarricense S.A. (LACSA), is the country's principal air carrier and the only one which provides international and domestic services. LACSA and eight other domestic airlines link all regions of the country with the capital and principal cities. Thirty-four of the 116 commercial airports are fully

operational. Air freight service is increasing in importance throughout the country.

In addition to nationwide telephone and telegraph services, Costa Rica has international cable and radio-telephone communications. The present inadequate telephone system will be vastly improved when the new nationwide communications service is completed by the Costa Rican Institute of Electricity, one of the country's important autonomous institutes. There are 39 or more commercial radio broadcasting stations in Costa Rica, the majority of them in San José. The country's first television station was inaugurated in San José in 1960.

Travel Information

Entry requirements, transportation routes and schedules, and customs regulations are subject to change. Therefore, when planning your trip, you should obtain the latest information from the nearest Costa Rican Consulate, a local travel agency, steamship lines, airline companies, or from the Inter-American Tourist Service of the Pan American Union.*

Entry Requirements

A Tourist Card good for 30 days and renewable for five months may be obtained from any Costa Rican Consulate or from your transportation company for \$2.00. Persons in possession of a valid passport may obtain a multiple entry visa free, good for four years. Other documents required are a smallpox vaccination certificate and a round trip ticket or proof of transportation to another country.

International Communications

Four or more international airlines provide the most direct transportation to Costa Rica from the United States and other countries in the Western Hemisphere. These include Pan American World Airways, Taca Inter-

* As part of its informational services, this office publishes: *Requirements for the Entry of United States Tourists into the Latin American Republics*, 10 cents; *Directory of Hotels-Central America, Panama, and the West Indies*, 10 cents; and *The Pan American Highway System*, 50 cents. Orders should be addressed to the Sales and Promotion Division, Pan American Union, Washington 6, D. C.



El Coco Airport

national Airlines. Royal Dutch Airlines, and the national line LACSA; all have regular flights to San José. At the present time there are few ships with passenger service stopping at Costa Rican ports. Your travel agent can supply you with current information on cargo ships with limited passenger accommodations that call at Costa Rican ports. The Inter-American Highway is the main route of overland transportation into Costa Rica from Nicaragua and points north. It is possible to travel by car from the United States into Costa Rica through Mexico, Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras, and Nicaragua. Pending completion of the Inter-American Highway to Panama, there is no road to Panama from Costa Rica.

Transportation within Costa Rica

The country's major cities and seaports are connected by plane, railway, or highway. There is bus service between San José and other cities of the Central Plateau. Air travel within the country is provided by eight domestic airlines, in addition to LACSA: Aerolíneas Nacionales (AN), Aerovías del Valle (AVE), Líneas del Pacífico (LAPA), Aerolíneas del Pacífico (ALPA), Aerovías Occidentales (AVO), Transportes Internos Costarricenses Aéreos (TICA), Expreso Aéreo Costarricense (EXACO), and Transportes Aéreos del Norte (TAN). All domestic airlines with the exception of LACSA and AN utilize single-engine aircraft. Railways connect the capital with the principal ports, Puntarenas and Puerto Limón.

Visitors may obtain detailed travel information from the Costa Rican Tourist Institute or the Costa Rican Automobile Association, both of which have offices in San José.

Currency and Prices

U.S. dollars circulate freely in Costa Rica and may be exchanged for colones at the current rate of about

Transportation within Costa Rica Currency and Prices Hotels and Restaurants Handicrafts

5.60 colones to the dollar, the colón being equivalent to almost 18 cents. Dollars and travelers' checks are easily exchanged for colones at banks, hotels, restaurants, and *casas de cambio* (exchange houses). The general level of prices in Costa Rica is reasonable. Hotel rates and meals are not expensive by comparison with the United States and some other countries.

Hotels and Restaurants

San José has many attractive and comfortable hotels and *pensiones* (boarding houses), as do other major cities including the ports of Limón and Puntarenas. The mountain lodges and country hotels also offer comfortable accommodations, as well as scenic beauty. Some of the restaurants in the capital have dance orchestras and floor shows, though this is not general in other parts of the country.

In the larger hotels and restaurants an international cuisine is offered; however, most visitors like to sample typical native dishes such as *tamal asado*, a pudding of sour cream, eggs, corn meal, cheese, and sugar; *bizcocho*, a cake of corn meal and fine cheese; *olla*, a popular soup or stew containing pork, beef, potatoes, onions, corn, beans, and tomatoes; and a delicious salad made from the hearts of the cabbage palm, *palmito*. A favorite dish of Guanacaste Province is *gallo pinto*, made of rice and beans, each of which has been cooked separately, then mixed and fried with hot chilis. The familiar *tamales* of ground corn and pork, wrapped in plantain leaves, tied and boiled, and the *tortillas*, thin corn cakes, are also popular. All the tropical fruits native to Central America grow in abundance in Costa Rica, including some that you may not be familiar with, such as *zapotes*, *nisperos*, *papayas*, *pitayas*, *anonas*, and *granadillas*.

Handicrafts

The craftsmen of Costa Rica produce many attractive and useful articles which can be bought in shops and native markets. Visitors are attracted by artistic items such as ceramics and small articles fashioned of mother-of-pearl, tortoise shell, and fine woods; by handwoven straw and hemp bags, hats, baskets, mats, rugs, and

beautifully embroidered blouses and handkerchiefs. There are also purses, boxes, belts, and suitcases of leather and trays and chests of well-polished Costa Rican woods. Especially popular are the brightly painted, miniature wooden oxcarts which typify the Costa Rican countryside. One finds jewelry of modern and antique design; particularly unique are copies of pre-Spanish golden ornaments cast in various representations of men and animals. There is an excellent collection of the originals in the National Museum in San José.

FACTS AND FIGURES

Area: 19,575 square miles
Capital: San José
Official language: Spanish

National flower: the *guaria morada* orchid
Flag: Five horizontal stripes; the upper and lower are blue, the next two white, and the center one red and twice the width of the others.

* Official estimate 1960

Suitable Clothing

What to wear in Costa Rica depends upon the regions you intend to visit; the higher the altitude, the cooler the climate. On the Central Plateau, including San José, you will need the type of clothing worn in spring and autumn in the United States, including a lightweight woolen topcoat. Light, tropical clothing is needed in the hot lowlands and coastal areas. It is advisable to take along a raincoat and/or umbrella, particularly if you visit Costa Rica during the rainy season.

Population: 1,149,537*
Population: 138,025*
Unit of currency: the *colón*
(equal to about \$0.18 U.S.)

Provinces	Population ¹	Area (Sq. Mi.)	Capital	Population ¹
San José	392,556	1,891	San José	138,025
Alajuela	214,302	3,667	Alajuela	17,265
Cartago	142,950	1,003	Cartago	16,767
Guanacaste	70,584	4,015	Liberia	7,145
Heredia	134,559	1,119	Heredia	16,538
Puntarenas	135,223	4,367	Puntarenas	20,849
Limón	58,267	3,629	Puerto Limón	21,421

¹ Official estimate as of December 31, 1959

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The Organization of American States (OAS) is an international organization created by the 21 American republics to achieve an order of peace and justice, to promote their solidarity, to strengthen their collaboration, and to defend their sovereignty, territorial integrity, and independence. The member states are Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, the United States, Uruguay, and Venezuela.

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The inter-American system was reorganized and given its present name in a Charter adopted at the Ninth International Conference of American States (Bogotá, Colombia, 1948). The Charter brought together the principles of American law that had developed during the preceding years; it also specified the organs or agencies through which the Organization was to accomplish its purposes. The OAS now functions through six principal organs:

PAN AMERICAN UNION • WASHINGTON, D. C.

1. The Inter-American Conference, supreme organ of the Organization, which meets every five years to decide general action and policy.
2. The Meeting of Consultation of Ministers of Foreign Affairs, which meets on request to consider problems of an urgent nature and of common interest, and which serves as the Organ of Consultation to deal with threats to the peace and security of the Continent.
3. The Council, which is composed of one representative from each state. It may act provisionally as Organ of Consultation. The Council has three organs: the Inter-American Economic and Social Council, the Inter-American Council of Jurists, and the Inter-American Cultural Council.
4. The Pan American Union, which is the central and permanent organ and General Secretariat of the OAS, with headquarters in Washington, D.C.
5. The Inter-American Specialized Conferences, which deal with special technical matters and develop specific aspects of inter-American cooperation.
6. The Inter-American Specialized Organizations, which have specific functions with respect to technical matters of common interest to the American states. There are six such agencies: The Inter-American Children's Institute, the Inter-American Commission of Women, the Inter-American Indian Institute, the Inter-American Institute of Agricultural Sciences, the Pan American Health Organization, and the Pan American Institute of Geography and History.

Through these organs and agencies, the OAS functions effectively to strengthen the peace and security of the Continent; to prevent possible causes of difficulties and to ensure the pacific settlement of disputes; to provide for common action in the event of aggression; to seek the solution of political, juridical, and economic problems that may arise among the American states; and to promote, by cooperative action, their economic, social and cultural development.

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